

## **REMARKS**

This present preliminary Amendment cancels claims 1-22 and adds new claims 23-30. Claims 23-30 are pending.

A cross reference to the parent application has been added to the specification.

The intention of the present amendment is to copy claims from U.S. Patent Application No. 10/158,061 in order to provoke an interference. The new claims mirror claims 1-5, 7, 9 and 13 from U.S. Patent Application No. 10/158,061, as published December 12, 2002 in U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2002/0185232 A1. A copy of the current file contents of U.S. Patent Application No. 10/158,061 has been requested by the Applicants, but has not yet been received.

The present application supports the new claims as follows:

Concerning claim 23, and referring to the Figures and applicable portions of the specification, the present application discloses a unit for applying printed slips 11 to packets P in packaging machines 17. The unit includes a first means (Fig. 1) from which feed slips are procured as single items 11 ordered in a stack 13, or a second means (Fig. 2) from which feed slips 11 are obtainable as cuts (see subdividing means 30, 31 and page 19, lines 22 to page 20, line 19) made from a continuous strip 29. The unit further comprises a universal pickup and application device (suction wheel 16 and pivotable carrier 14) installed permanently in the machine to take up the slips with equal facility from either the first or the second feed means at a pickup station (page 8, lines 8-14; page 11, lines 8-11; page 19, lines 6-16; page 24, lines 1-8).

Concerning claim 24, first feed means (magazine 10, Fig. 1) and second feed means (subdividing means 30, Fig. 2) are mutually interchangeable (page 8, lines 8-14; page 11, lines 8-11; page 19, lines 6-16; page 24, lines 1-8).

Concerning claim 25, the first feed means includes a magazine 10 containing a plurality of slips 11 ordered in a stack 13 aligned on a relative axis substantially perpendicular to the pickup station (see Fig. 1).

Concerning claim 26, the second feed means comprises units to respectively to decoil, feed and cut a continuous strip 29 (see reel 34, rollers for advancing 28, and subdividing means 30, 31). The feed unit is designed to index the continuous strip, at least when in the neighborhood of the pickup station, through predetermined steps and in a direction coinciding with a plane disposed parallel and in close proximity to a reference plane of the pickup station (see Fig. 2).

Concerning claim 27, the pickup and application device includes at least one pickup assembly 14, 16 capable of movement between the pickup station (at feeding device) and a release position AS (see Figs. 1 and 2).

Concerning claim 28, the pickup assembly 14, 16 comprises a pickup mechanism 16 caused to roll tangentially to a reference plane of the pickup station during the step of picking up the slips from the selfsame station and thereafter to advance along a predetermined path, passing from the pickup station to the release position AS. (see Figs. 1 and 2).

Concerning claim 29, the pickup mechanism is furnished with at least one suction cup 12 connectable to a source of negative pressure and designed to attract a slip occupying the reference plane of the pickup station by rolling against one face thereof. (see Figs. 1 and 2).

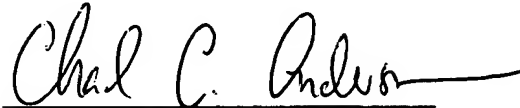
Concerning claim 30, the pickup and application device comprises first and second guiding and locating means serving to ensure the correct transfer of the slips. (see entraining member 20 or upper guide 32 and lower guides 33).

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If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Respectfully submitted,

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